

REMARKS

This paper is presented in response to the final official action dated August 21, 2009 in which claims 1, 2, 4, and 7-14 were pending and rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0102203 to Keong ("Keong") in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0049634 to Stewart ("Stewart"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and request that they be withdrawn.

By this amendment, claims 1, 4, 7, 9, and 12 are amended, claims 15-19 are new, and claim 2 is canceled. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 4, 7, 9, and 12 and new claims 15-19 may be found in the specification and claims as originally filed. For example, support may be found at least in original claims 1-6, page 2, lines 22-24, and page 5, lines 14-25. No new matter is added. Thus, claims 1, 4, and 7-19 are pending and at issue.

This paper is timely filed and accompanies a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) and the required fee. Additionally, a supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) is submitted herewith.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, and 7-14, as amended, as obvious over Keong in view of Stewart. Each of the pending claims recites a method (or device) for producing a postal item comprising, in part, a generated postal indicium taking into account the address information of a recipient, where parts of the recipient's address and franking information are incorporated into the postal indicium to increase franking security. Neither Keong nor Stewart discloses or suggests a generated postal indicium taking into account the address information of a recipient, where parts of the recipient's address and franking information are incorporated into the postal indicium to increase franking security.

The claimed method and device provide increased franking security, rapid determination of authenticity, and more efficient delivery than known methods and devices for producing postal items. In particular, the claimed method and device

provide increased franking security because a portion of the recipient's address and the franking information are combined and incorporated into the postage indicium making the postage indicum more difficult to forge. See the instant specification at page 4, lines 4-7. Additionally, the postage indicia may be checked in an automated process to determine authenticity. Id. Furthermore, franking and addressing processes may be combined in the claimed method and system, thereby reducing process steps and increasing system efficiency. See the instant specification at page 5, lines 14-25.

Keong and Stewart fail to disclose or suggest incorporating recipient address information and franking information into a postage indicium. Moreover, Keong and Stewart fail to even recognize the problems of forgery, inauthentic marks, and process inefficiency of known devices for producing postal items.

Keong discloses an order handling inventory management system. The Keong system includes a database and a radio frequency subsystem to detect identifiers on products stored in a storage site. See Keong, abstract. While Keong discloses printing mailing labels and/or packing lists, Keong does not disclose or suggest incorporating franking information and address information into a postal indicium. Keong does not even acknowledge the problem of forgery of franking information or authenticating a postage indicia. As a result, Keong fails to disclose or suggest incorporating recipient address information and franking information into a postage indicium, as recited by each of the pending claims.

Stewart fails to disclose or suggest incorporating recipient address information and franking information into a postage indicium, nor was Stewart cited as disclosing such an element. Stewart discloses a system and method for conducting electronic commerce in the metals industry. The Stewart system includes an electronic network community for buyers and sellers of metals. Once a buyer and seller agree on contractual details, the Stewart system may initiate a logistics module to locate a transportation carrier. See paragraphs [0088], [0106], and [0110]. Within the logistics module, one or more transportation carriers may bid

on the job of transporting the subject material. Stewart does not disclose or suggest printing a label of any sort, let alone a postage indicium having franking information and address information incorporated in the postage indicium. Moreover, one of ordinary skill in the art would not modify Stewart to include a postage indicium of any sort. The system described by Stewart involves the transportation of large quantities of metal. Transportation of large quantities of metal is usually arranged by way of a contract with a carrier company. The contract would include essential terms, such as location of pickup, quantity and type of material, location of delivery, and payment arrangements. Because payment is usually arranged in the contract, there is no need to include franking information of any sort on the metal material to be transported. Thus, even if one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to label the subject metal material, he/she would not be motivated to include franking information on such a label because the contract between the buyer/seller and the shipper would already include payment details.

Because Keong and Stewart fail to disclose or suggest incorporating recipient address information and franking information into a postage indicium, none of the pending claims can be rendered obvious over any combination of Keong and Stewart. For this reason, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, and 7-14.

New claims 15-19 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1. Thus, new claims 15-19 are allowable over Keong and Stewart at least for the reasons set forth above.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending claims is allowable over Keong and Stewart.

Should the examiner wish to discuss the foregoing or any matter of form in an effort to advance this application toward allowance he is urged to telephone the undersigned at the indicated number.

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Respectfully submitted,

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